

REMARKS

STATUS OF CLAIMS

Claims 1-10 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claim 11 is cancelled.

SUMMARY OF ACTION

In the Official Action, claim 11 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), as unpatentable over Japanese Patent Publication 2001-305552 (Shuichi).

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's indication that the application contains allowable subject matter, and that claims 1-10 are allowed.

EXAMINER INTERVIEW

Applicants' attorney acknowledges the courtesies extended to him by the Examiner in a telephone interview on June 28, 2005. In that interview, Applicants' attorney requested a personal interview to discuss the rejection of claim 11 and to place the application in condition for allowance. The Examiner advised Applicants' attorney that he would not conduct a personal interview or consider proposed amendments to the claims after final rejection.

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

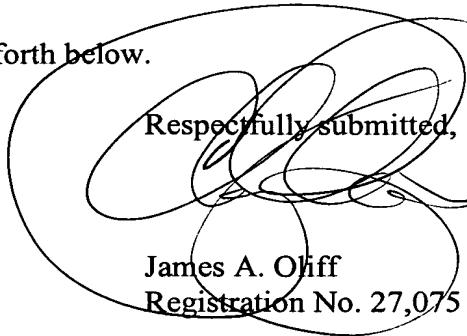
The rejection of claim 11 over the cited art respectfully is traversed. Nevertheless, without conceding the propriety of the rejection, and solely to advance prosecution of the present application to issue, claim 11 is cancelled herein without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein. Applicants reserve all rights to the subject matter recited in claim 11, including the right to file a continuation application directed to the subject matter. No new matter has been added.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 since the amendments: (a) place the application in condition for allowance (for the reasons discussed herein); (b) do not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration (as the amendments amplify issues previously discussed throughout prosecution); (c) satisfy a requirement of form asserted in the previous Office Action; (d) do not present any additional claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally rejected claims; and (e) place the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. The amendments are necessary and were not earlier presented because they are made in response to arguments raised in the final rejection. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

Applicants believe the present Amendment is responsive to each of the points raised by the Examiner in the Official Action, and submits that the Application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-10 and the application earnestly are solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.



Respectfully submitted,
James A. O'Neill
Registration No. 27,075

Christopher Philip Wrist
Registration No. 32,078

JAO:CPW/eks

Date: July 5, 2005

OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 19928
Alexandria, Virginia 22320
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

DEPOSIT ACCOUNT USE
AUTHORIZATION
Please grant any extension
necessary for entry;
Charge any fee due to our
Deposit Account No. 15-0461